

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
THE WOODSTOCK ACADEMY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
October 17, 2023



These minutes are for
informational purposes only.

PRESENT: Asikainen, Samantha; Beckwith, Martha; Bentley, Cary; Blackmer, Robert; Carabeau, Garry; Cording, Leisl; Duvall, Nancy (C); Frankhouser, Hans (W); Higgins, Edwin; Larrow, Jeff; McGinn, Walter; Munroe, Heather; Paquette, Philippa; Rich, Matthew; Samborowski, Leonard; Swenson, Christine; Tuttle, Brent (P)

ADMINISTRATION: Hughes, Karin; Millar, Madison; Rigney, John; Romero, Samantha; Sandford, Chris; Singleton, Holly; Sturdevant, Jon; Susi, Michael; Woodland, Julie

ABSENT WITH NOTIFICATION: Ellsworth, Robert (E); Livernois, Jay (Ex-Officio); Morse, David; Perkins-Banas, Melissa (B); Quinn, Eric; Rhyhart, Hans; Young, Scott

GUESTS: Erin Canty and Cassie Noble

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by President Swenson at 7:02 p.m.

2. Community Participation – None.

3. Secretary's Report—Minutes of September 12, 2023

MOTION: (Larrow/Tuttle) To approve the minutes of September 12, 2023. All voted Yes except Nancy Duvall and Jeff Larrow, who abstained. Motion passes.

4. Teacher and Staff Member of Year Recognition

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton introduced Administrative Assistant Erin Canty, who was recognized as Staff Member of the Year. Mrs. Singleton praised her positive energy and enthusiasm, and Mrs. Canty was presented with a bouquet of flowers. The group thanked her.

5. Board Reports

a. President's Report

i. Correspondence

Head of School Sandford provided supplemental information about the correspondence included in the packet. Highlights included letters to the sending towns about trustee terms, resignations, condolences, and congratulations. The Town of Union requested a one-year extension on their existing contract, and the group expressed its willingness to work with Union's BOE.

ii. Expulsion Hearing Officer Discussion

President Swenson facilitated Board discussion about utilizing a hearing officer as an additional option during expulsion proceedings. Dean of Student Affairs Karin Hughes provided an overview of the types of /volume of disciplinary issues being seen in school and described the experience of other schools that utilize a hearing officer. Significant discussion ensued. It was agreed to move forward with the concept by utilizing a task force comprised of Mrs. Hughes, the Board's attorney, and several Board members to consider how the use of a hearing officer might be a benefit or challenge to existing practice.

b. Committee Reports—questions/discussion on reports provided in packet

There were no questions.

6. Woodstock Academy Administration Reports

a. Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Report

i. 2023-2024—Budget Update

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi provided an overview of the Profit and Loss Report, saying that things seemed positive so far. Brief discussion ensued about food service costs.

ii. Academy Building Restoration Project Update

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi shared that the Academy Building Project is moving along well overall. Supply chain issues with the elevator installation have been an ongoing concern. The process for applying for tax credits will begin next week. There were no questions.

iii. 2022-2023 Audit Update

Associate Head of School for Finance and Operations Mike Susi stated the auditors are viewing samples right now, and he expects to have a draft of their report in the next week. The auditors have not identified any issues, and he does not expect any significant findings in their reports.

iv. Other – None.

v. Board questions/discussion – None.

b. Associate Head of School Report

i. October Update

Associate Head of School Holly Singleton provided a detailed overview of her October Update report, which is attached at the bottom of these meeting minutes. There were many noteworthy updates, events, and achievements.

iii. Other – None.

iv. Board questions/discussion – None.

c. Associate Head of School for Advancement

i. Advancement Update and Loos Center Events

Associate Head of School for Advancement Jon Sturdevant shared highlights from Alumni Weekend, saying that in addition to local alumni, people from many states came to participate. Dr. Jerry Cooper, who holds 17 patents for laser-related activities, was inducted into the Hall of Excellence. The highlight for Mr. Sturdevant was honoring former trustee and foundation director Paul Kelly as he received the Distinguished Alumni Award for Service to Alma Mater. The bronze plaque that identifies “Kelly Field” will be installed soon.

Other events included the Share the Love fundraising campaign to build four new tennis courts (hopefully) in time for the 2024-2025 season, the “Then and Now” alumni art show, Eaglemania, the American Soldier performance, and the Ocean State Pops concert.

ii. Communications Presentation

Communications Director Maddy Millar and Director of Strategic Marketing Samantha Romero were introduced. Their PowerPoint presentation included data analytics, types of direct marketing materials being used, and an explanation of our new branding identifier—NEXTGEN. *At the Woodstock Academy, we are creating the Next Generation of leaders, scientists, innovators, artists, etc.* It is hoped faculty and staff will incorporate this messaging into their materials.

iii. Annual Giving Day—November 14, 2023

Trustees were asked to please make a gift of any size because the school goal remains 100% participation.

iv. Other – None.

v. Board questions/discussion – None.

d. Head of School Report

i. Approve Policies—Second Read

Head of School Sandford provided the rationale behind any edits to the Policies in the packet.

MOTION: (Frankhouser/Paquette) To approve the Policies listed below as presented.

- a) 2100.5 – Administrative Staff Organization and Lines of Responsibilities
- b) 3416 – Audit

- c) 4112.5 – Security Check/Fingerprinting
- d) 4117.5 – Termination of Employment
- e) 4121 – Substitute Teachers
- f) 4218 – Criminal History Record Information
- g) 5125 – Student Records

Unanimous

ii. Holiday Gathering on Sunday, December 10, from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

It was hoped all could attend.

iii. Other – None.

iv. Board questions/discussion – None.

7. Other Items

Matt Rich and Jeff Larrow were congratulated for running full marathons in different cities last weekend.

8. Executive Session—Legal and Personnel – None.

9. Possible Action Based on Executive Session – None.

There was no longer a need for an executive session.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: (Paquette/Larrow) To adjourn the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Woodland

Julie Woodland

Board Clerk

The Woodstock Academy prepares all students by providing diverse opportunities through a rigorous curriculum and a variety of programs in order to cultivate the necessary skills to become lifelong learners and global citizens.



MONDAY MEMO

School Updates

- Additional new staff hired: Christopher DiLillo (Social Studies), Michelle Luciano (Special Education), Tony Rivera (Campus Safety), Katherine Harrington (ELL Tutor), Reginald Stovell (Admissions)
- An updated cellphone policy (where students are asked to put phones in a holder at the start of class) has had an enormously positive impact on the learning culture of classrooms.
- Class meetings and the Freshmen Focus program has been reintroduced this year.
- The Woodstock Academy was awarded the CT District Export Council Award in Connecticut which recognizes our contributions as an educational institution in providing international students a quality educational experience.
- WA hosted Jazz Girls Day, in partnership with The University of South Carolina and Colchester High School. Sixty middle and high school girls participated.
- The Arts Outreach club volunteered to help with face painting at the Child Voice booth at Buell's Orchard, helping to raise \$1,420 for young girls (and their children) in Uganda who have been trafficked.
- The Academy received a \$162,000 grant for mental health from the Connecticut State Department of Education; the funds are spread over a period of three years.
- The Student Council collected 47 pints of blood at its fall blood drive.
- The National Honor Society inducted 46 scholars last week. The Math Honor Society inducted 19, and the Science Honor Society inducted 46 this week.

Student Achievements

- Freshmen Avery Gregoire (W), Evony N'Chonon (P), Isabelle Tedisky (P), and Brandan Wright (W) received Honorable Mention for the submissions to Eastern Connecticut State University's Literary Festival.
- Sophie Gronski (W), a junior, achieved 1,000 career sets in last week's volleyball game.
- Eight students received the College Board's National Rural and Small-Town Award for their performance on the SAT test: Charles Caggiano (W), Danielle Cabassa (P), Dominic Pascale (B), Emilia Costa (P), Emma Kerr (P), Kayleigh Murray (B), Ryan Rivera Cabrera (W), and Xander Miller (W).

Faculty & Staff Achievements

- Eric Davidson was awarded a "Pride of Putnam Award" for his volunteer help to troubleshoot, install, program, and train Putnam staff on the new lighting board and sound equipment in the Middle School Auditorium.
- Lauren Churchill has been selected to represent Connecticut in the National Band Directors Marching Band and the Michael D. Sewell Foundation. She will be marching in the 2023 Macy's Day Parade.
- Annmarie Thibodeau received a \$1,000 Flanagan Grant from the Connecticut Association of Schools to support the Spanish 6's project on careers, culture, and language.

Upcoming Events

- 10/20 – EagleMania Concert, The Loos, 7:00 PM <https://boxoffice.theloos.org/w/event.aspx?id=1359> (\$29)
- 10/23 – Volleyball's Dig Pink game and fundraiser, Alumni Field House, 5:30 PM
- 10/26 – Future Centaur Open House, 4:00-7:00 PM
- 10/27 – Trick-or-Treat Street, Bowen Building, 4:00-6:00 PM
- 11/07 – Remote Learning Day
- 11/09 – Guest Author Series: Scott Gac, Bracken Memorial Library, 6:00 PM
- 11/14 – WINY at WA for Giving Day
- 11/16 – American Soldier Performance, The Loos, 9:00 AM
- 11/17 – Fall Fling & Cabaret, The Commons, 6:00 PM